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AIRGRAM

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TO : Department of State

DEPT PASS: MANAGUA, SAN JOSE, SAN SALVADOR, TEGUCIGALPA, USCINCSO FOR POLAD, BOB

FROM : Amembassy GUATEMALA

SUBJECT : Monthly Guerrilla Report -- December

REF :

Summary

1. The internal security situation did not change much during the month. The Army continued to vigorously pursue the guerrillas in the countryside, particularly in the Izabal-Zacapa region where it has been putting a severe crimp in their operations. The government and the army also continued to collaborate in their public relations campaign. The result has been that while the terrorists have continued their activities on about the same scale as in previous months, the atmosphere has been moving to one of guarded confidence in government and private circles.

Activities of Security Forces

2. The government continues to demonstrate its determination to resolve the guerrilla problem, and the President assured the country in his Christmas message that the guerrillas would be "surgically amputated" from the body politic. The government took several concrete actions to make this promise good.

A. Military Operations

3. The Army's anti-guerrilla campaign in the countryside continued to meet with success with most of the action taking place in the Izabal-Zacapa region where the army continued its heavy patrolling. There were military

Enclosures:

1. Total Guerrillas Reported Killed or Captured.
2. No. of Guerrillas Reported Killed or Captured since October 1.
3. Frequency of Terrorist Actions.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/WR

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Guatemala A- 290

2

operations throughout the country, however, notably in the departments of Santa Rosa, Retalhuleu and Chiquimula. The Guatemalan Air Force also participated in the campaign, flying several anti-guerrilla raids during the month, and while the results were inconclusive it was encouraging to note that there were signs that the air-ground coordination system was improving. Guerrilla casualties suffered at the hands of the military in the countryside during the month added up to 17 killed and 10 captured according to reported figures which was almost identical to the corresponding figures for the previous month. (See enclosures 1 and 2.) The actual figures for both periods were almost surely higher, however, since many casualties are simply not reported.

It is clear that the army is meeting with success in its anti-guerrilla operations.

B. Police Activity in the Capital

4. The police have not been scoring the same dramatic successes as the army, but they were responsible for three guerrilla deaths and two captured, an improvement on November's 1 and 1 record. Police patrolling was stepped up over the holidays and is expected to be increased even more.

C. Psychological Warfare

5. An important area of success in the country's insurgency effort has been in the field of psychological warfare. The government and the army have recognized the importance of capitalizing on their military success to rally public support against the guerrillas and there were more government organized campesino demonstrations damning the guerrillas and supporting the government and the army.

6. In addition the propaganda machine has been operating and leaflets, posters and paid advertisements in the papers have in one way or another supported the anti-guerrilla cause. The main thrust of the propaganda has been to show that FAR are enemies of people (sob stories about families of FAR-killed policemen, write-ups of campesino demonstrations, etc.) and that FAR is a sinking ship. (Pictures of dead guerrillas, etc.) ~~REMOVED~~ IX

D. Rural Development: Izabal-Zacapa Plan

7. Another highly important development was a pilot plan to change the socio-economic structure of the Northeast of the country, which was announced by the President on December 15. The plan will be initiated in the politically critical areas in Izabal and Zacapa, and it looks as if the various ministries and private agencies charged with its execution heeded the President's call for early and visible results. For example, Colonel Mendoza, former army chief of Public Relations has been appointed as military coordinator for these activities.

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Guatemala A- 290

3

which is an indication of the importance placed on the plan by the military. Some projects are already underway and a number of studies are in progress. This is the type of program the US Government has been encouraging the GOG to adopt in this key area and if its early promise is fulfilled it could prove to be a most effective tool in the counterinsurgency effort.

E. Armas for Finqueros

8. One measure of the Government's confidence was the exempting from the state of siege regulation of a long standing provision of the penal code under which farm operators were designated "agents of authority" and were permitted to carry arms and to enforce the law on their own land and in defense of their lives and properties. The GOG had previously balked at invoking this regulation fearing the arms would end up in guerrilla hands.

F. Congressional Action: Police Power Strengthened

9. The Congress also did its bit by passing a law aimed at strengthening the counter-insurgency forces. The new law reformed significantly three articles in the criminal code (dating from 1898). Under the new provisions the police can now use force in resisting attack without fearing jail detention, can testify more effectively in criminal court cases, and their declarations to judicial authorities will be given enough status to hold suspects until a formal hearing can be held.

Guerrilla Activity

10. Guerrillas continued to plague the country but there is evidence that the various direct pressures on them by the security forces, and the indirect pressures of the loss of much campesino support is causing them to cut down their more ambitious plans and restrict themselves to a number of minor, individually insignificant actions. In the Izabal-Zacapa region, as was mentioned above, the actual guerrilla casualties certainly run higher than the reported 17 killed, 10 captured in the countryside and one Army source was quoted as saying that as many as 200 guerrillas have been killed. Whatever the exact figure is, it is clear that security force have been severely crippling the guerrillas in the Izabal-Zacapa area.

There are reports that because of these losses the FAR and the PGT plan to reduce their operations for a month or so in an effort to regroup and reorganize. (The reorganization might cause some problems since there is reported friction between the FAR and the Party and at least one party leader suspects the FAR of having plans to take over the Party.) In addition to its other problems the FAR is thought to be short of funds so perhaps a period of "reorganization" for a while is all it will be able to afford. Simple survival is in itself a big job.

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Guatemala A-290

4

11. The guerrillas were by no means inactive during December, however, and from a purely numerical standpoint their actions were down only slightly from November. (See enclosure 3) The terrorist actions failed to increase is in itself somewhat encouraging, however, since this is the first month that did not show an increase since the new government took office.

12. The guerrilla activity there was followed the usual pattern:

A. Shootings: There were about 10 shootings which appeared politically motivated during the month. Security force personnel were still a target for several, but to a lesser extent than last month. One military policeman and his family were shot up in Zacapa, killing the wife. A customs policeman was wounded in Escuintla, and 2 military policemen were fired on in the capital.

B. Robbery: There were a number of dramatic robberies during the month, including one that netted the equivalent of Q214,000 (Q1 = \$1) including U.S. \$30,000, from a branch of the Bank of Guatemala, but it is difficult to sort the work of common criminals from the guerrillas and in this bank case Guatemalan police suspect a group of professional thieves. This case had political overtones, since the bank authorities reportedly had prior information about the holdup which they turned over to the Army who turned it over to the police who apparently did nothing. There was speculation that the President might attempt to use the incident as an excuse to make some changes in top police officials but to date the lineup is unchanged. Other robberies include Q30,000 from another bank, Q36,000 from a train and Q3,000 from an armored truck.

C. Sabotage: Power lines and telephone and telegraph lines were the main target of the saboteurs this month. Their big day was Christmas when a number of high tension wires were cut in several locations throughout the country.

D. Bombs: Bombings fell off a bit in December, down to 5 in the capital. The car of the Dominican Chargé was the object of one. The most potentially dangerous landed on the roof of a store in a crowded shopping center. Had it gone over the edge of the roof into the center it almost surely would have caused personal injury to numerous shoppers.

E. Armed bands in country: There were a number of reports of large armed bands operating in different parts of the country. Once again, it is difficult to tell just who is a guerrilla. One band of ten to twenty, who raided the town of El Tumbador, San Marcos for example, were wearing the uniform of comisionados militares and have been identified as such. They got away with about Q40,000. Another group of 60 or so who raided the police station at San Pedro Yepocata, Chimaltenango, was led by 3 men in comisionado militar uniforms. The police station in San Agustín Acasaguastlán, El Progreso, was attacked twice, and the one in Concepción Las Minas, Chiquimula, once. In addition, the towns of Jones, Zacapa and Laguna Seca, Chiquimula, were both terrorized.

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Guatemala A- 29C

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F. Common Criminality: An unfortunate sidelight to the guerrilla saga has been an accompanying rise in common criminality. It is often hard to tell which crimes do in fact have political overtones. Before real stability can come to Guatemala, the security forces will have to make serious in-roads into these apparently well-organized gangs of profiteers.

Far Right

13. Rightist activity in the country itself has been petering out although there are still reports that the action units, CRAG and Mano Blanca are conducting their own private anti-guerrilla war. There are also reports that in some parts of the country the CRAG and the Mano Blanca have teamed up with comisionados militares in their extermination efforts.

15. While the government has not shown itself to be unduly upset by these reports, they continued to be a cause for concern.

16. List of Terrorist or Counter-Insurgency Incidents in December:

Dec. 1 Ten to twenty military policemen terrorize town of El Tumbador, San Marcos, get away with valuables worth about Q40,000. (Weeks 48 & 49)

Dec. 2 Four presumed guerrillas try to rob government messenger on banking mission in Guatemala City and kill him; one guerrilla killed by bank guard, others flee. (Week 49)

Dec. 3 About ten armed men ambush and kill Chiquimula farmer with PID connections. (Week 49)

Two bodies found in Chiquimula. (Week 49)

Guard at MLN headquarters in capital wounded Dec. 3 by unidentified armed men. (Week 49)

Dec. 4 1000 campesinos demonstrate against guerrillas in Rio Hondo, Zacapa. Two guerrillas killed by Army near Rio Hondo, two carbines captured. (Guatemala 2842) (Week 49)

Telephone lines on Pan American highway sabotaged, but service restored within hours.

Dec. 5 Two Army G-2 agents fired on in capital. (Guatemala 2896)
1000 campesinos demonstrate against guerrillas in Gualan, Zacapa (Guatemala 2896)

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Guatemala A- 200

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- Dec. 6 2 bombs do slight damage in capital (Weeka 49)
- Dec. 7 Oil tanks and bridge near Belice border, burned. (Weeka 49)
- Jalapa city aide killed, companion wounded; assailants flee. (Weeka 49)
- Dec. 8 Five armed youths attack Sonora radio station, foiled in attempt to play subversive tape; but man killed with grenade. (Weeka 49)
- 60 armed persons led by 3 military policemen attempt to overpower civilian police station in San Pedro Yepocata, Chimaltenango; one military policeman killed. (Weeka 50)
- Dec. 9 Attack by 30 guerrillas on military police station in San Agustín Acasaguastlán, El Progreso, foiled. (Weeka 50)
- Body found at Morales, Izabal, another at Gualan, Zacapa. Slight damage caused to homes in Guatemala City by hand grenades. (Guatemala 2986)
- Dec. 10 Military policeman and family shot up in Zacapa; wife dies. (Weeka 50)
- Military and civil police clash in San Marcos (Guatemala 2986, Dec. 12; and 3060, Dec. 15)
- Dec. 11 Campesinos demonstrate against guerrillas at both Quezaltenango and Los Amates, Izabal (Guatemala 2986).
- Dec. 12 Military police in Esquintla arrest 11 campesinos who admit collusion with FAR. (Guatemala 3021)
- FAR terrorists rob train of Q36,000, kill policeman. (Guatemala 2986)
- Three military policemen who led attack at San Pedro Yepocata, Dec. 8, arrested; a fourth killed.
- 3 presumed guerrillas captured near Patzun, Chimaltenango.
- Dec. 13 Army kills three, wounds one in clash with 15 guerrillas (possibly students) in Chilapa, Santa Rosa, retrieve some equipment (Weeka 50).
- Bomb partially destroys Dominican diplomat's car. (Weeka 50)
- Dec. 14 La Hora reports existence of training camp presumably for rightists on Guatemalan farm of one Thompson probably known rightist Carlos T. (Guatemala 3060)

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Guatemala A- 290

7

Grenade fails to do harm in crowded shopping center. (Guatemala 3060)

Dec. 15 Two left-of-center journalists threatened by Mano Blanca should they dare to run for presidency and vice presidency of Guatemalan Press Association. (Weeka 51)

Army claims killing 6 guerrillas in Zacapa. (Guatemala 3095)

Band of youths drag two campesinos from homes, shoot them in street in Santa Lucia, Zacapa. (Guatemala 3095)

Presumed guerrilla killed and deputy police chief wounded in exchange of fire in Chiquimula. (Guatemala 3151)

Dec. 18 Radio Mundial station pointlessly broken into by presumed guerrillas. (Guatemala 3231)

Anti-guerrilla demonstrations in El Tumbador and Malacatan, both San Marcos.

Arsonist attempts to burn home of PR Secretary for legal affairs in Guatemala City. (Guatemala 3231)

Dec. 20 Attempt to burn army colonel's car foiled (Guatemala 3231)

Dec. 21 Tobacco Co. truck robbed of \$3,000. (Guatemala 3231)

Another attempted truck holdup foiled. (Guatemala 3231)

Finca burned in Tiquisate, Escuintla. (Guatemala 3231)

Telephone and telegraph lines near capital cut. (Guatemala 3231)

Dec. 22 Guerrilla band raids Jones, Zacapa, kidnaps some campesinos. (Weeka 52)

One guerrilla killed in Army. Guerrilla clash in San Jorge, Zacapa (Guatemala 3231).

Colonel's car bombed near capital (Guatemala 3231).

Dec. 23 Bank of Guatemala branch robbed of the equivalent of \$214,000, including U.S.\$30,000. (Guatemala 3231, Weeka 52)

Military policeman shot at in capital, unharmed. (Guatemala 3231)

Woman truck driver wounded by machinegun fire, in Izabal. (Guatemala 3231)

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8

Police find German-made grenade in capital street. (Guatemala 3231)

Dec. 24 Guerrilla band attacks police station at San Agustín Acasaguastlán, El Progreso; one guerrilla presumed dead. (Weeka 52)

Military policeman shot at with machinegun in capital, wounded. (Guatemala 3231)

Dec. 25 High tension wires cut at various points in country.

Dec. 26 Army kills two guerrillas near Retalhuleu. (Guatemala 3231)

Dec. 27 Farm in Escuintla burned. (Guatemala 3231)

Bomb exploded in zone 1 of capital. No damage. (Weeka 52)

House raided; one guerrilla killed

Two private security agents apparently kidnapped in Quirigua, Izabal.

Dec. 28 Army raids FAR indoctrination center in Olopa, Chiquimula, kill one, arrest seven; several escape.

Two presumed guerrillas captured in gunfight in capital.

Twenty bandits terrorize Laguna Seca, Esquipulas, wound military policeman in his home. (Guatemala 3320)

Dec. 29 Five masked gunmen in police uniforms storm police station in Concepción Las Minas, Chiquimula; Dec. 29, flee when police answer fire. (Guatemala 3320)

Dec. 29/30 Four bodies found on banks of Rio Motagua near Rio Hondo, Zacapa. (Guatemala 3320)

Dec. 30 One customs policeman (Guardia de Hacienda) wounded by FAR group in Escuintla (Guatemala 3320).

Guatemalan Consul in Puerto Cortes, Honduras, killed in capital (Guatemala 3320).

Dec. 31 Six bodies found in Izabal and Zacapa.

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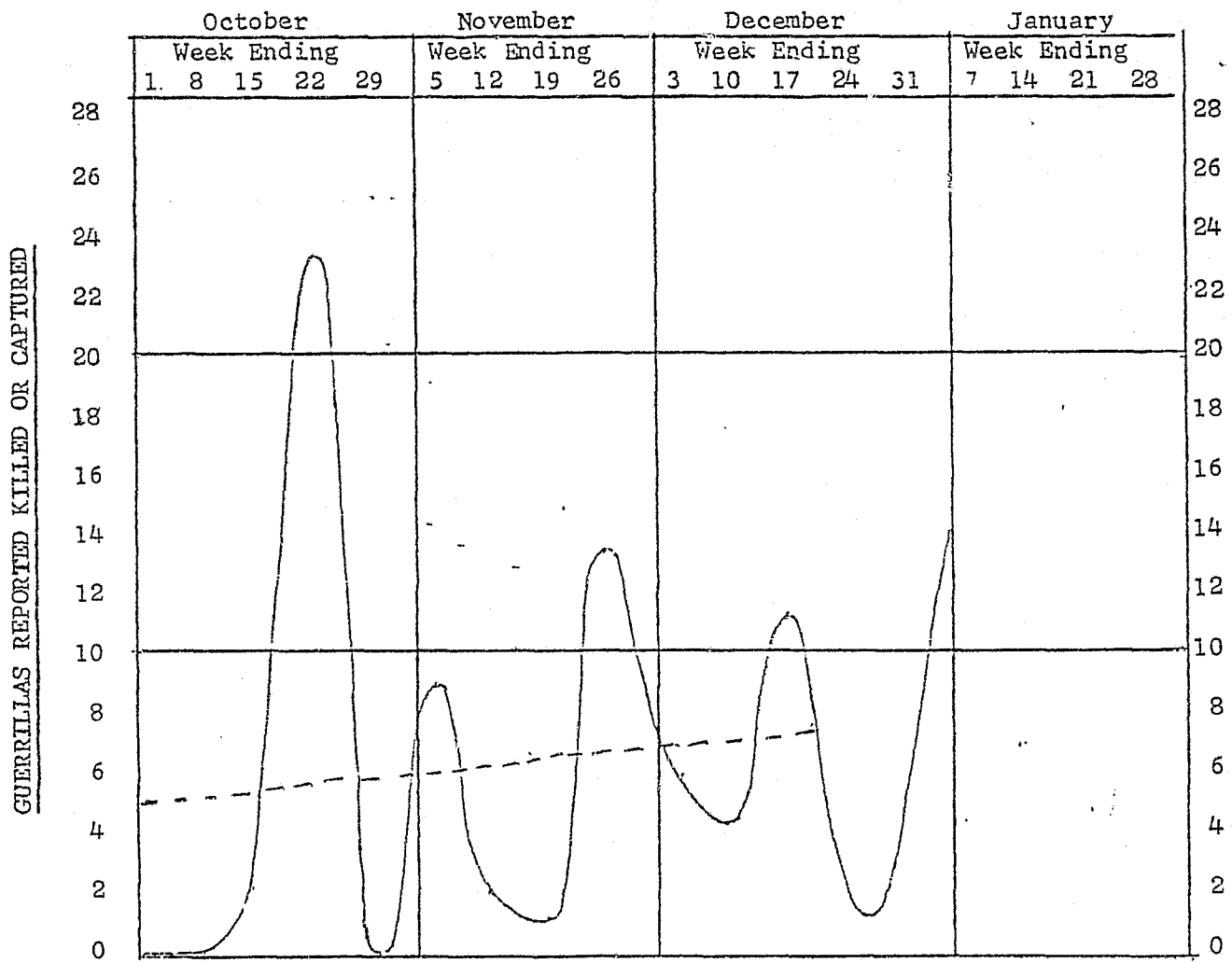
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Enclosure 1
Guatemala A- 290

TOTAL GUERRILLAS REPORTED KILLED OR CAPTURED



Total 27
Killed 19
Captured 8

Weekly
Average 5.4

Total 29
Killed 19
Captured 10

Weekly
Average 6.5

Total 32
Killed 20
Captured 12

Weekly
Average 7.2

Solid line is actual weekly figure.

Dotted line is weekly average for month.

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Enclosure 2
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NUMBER OF GUERRILLAS REPORTED
KILLED OR CAPTURED SINCE OCTOBER 1

Date	Killed			Captured		
	Total	In City	Out/City	Total	In City	Out/City
October (Prior to 8th)				1		1
15				1		1
18	3	3		6	6	
20	16		16			
Total for October	19	3	16	8	6	2
November 5				9		9
7	2		2			
16				1	1	
22	4		4			
23	4		4			
24	2		2			
25	2		2			
26	2		2			
27	2		2			
28	1	1				
Total for November	19	1	18	10	1	9
December 2	1	1				
2	2		2			
5	1	1				
?				3		3
13	3		3			
14	6		6			
15	1		1			
22	1		1			
24	1		1			
26	2		2			
28	1	1				
28				2	2	
28	1		1	7		7
Total December	20	3	17	12	2	10
<u>Total Since October 1</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>21</u>

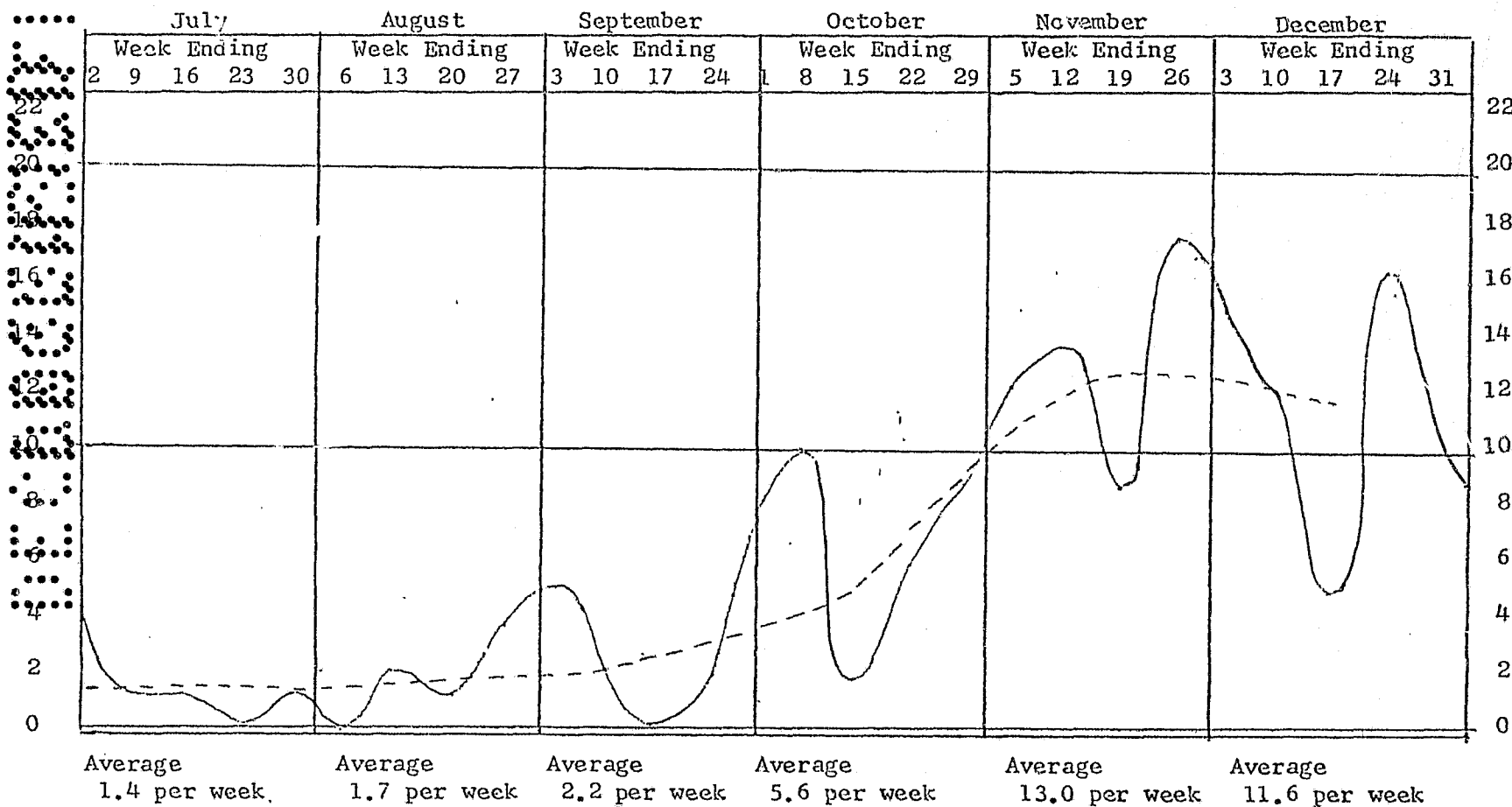
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FREQUENCY OF TERRORIST ACTIONS

TERRORIST ACTS



Solid line is actual weekly figure.
Dotted line is weekly average figure, per month.

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